ALBION TRIUMPHANT:

OR,

ADMIRAL RODNEY'S

VICTORY OVER THE FRENCH FLEET.

A POEM.

[Price One Shilling and Sixpence.]

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A POEM.

——— O Famâ ingens, ingentior armis,
——— quibus cælo te laudibus æquem?
Justitiæne prius mirer, belline laborum?
VIRGIL, Æn. XI. 124.

——— Grates persolvere dignas
Non opis est nostræ ——— I. 604.

By J. N. PUDDICOMBE, M. A.

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M DCC LXXXII.

ALBION TRIUMPHANT.

A POEM.

AWHILE my lips the warbling reed forego,
Awhile unheard the bubbling fountains flow;
I ceaſe beneath the myrtle ſhade to ſing
The full-blown beauties of the roſe-lipp'd ſpring:
No more the ſimple, unambitious ſwain;
For loftier notes I change the rural ſtrain.
The theme I chuſe ſuperiour ſkill requires,
And bids rapt fancy rouſe her latent fires.
Farewell, ye manſions of inglorious eaſe;
Now nought but RODNEY's glorious deeds can pleaſe.

Oppreſs'd Britannia lifting from the ground
Her beauteous head with deathleſs laurels crown'd;
Inſulting Gallia, hapleſs vanquiſh'd maid,
Low at her feet in mournful ſilence laid;
Fair Conqueſt, bright-eyed offspring of the ſky,
Expanding wide her eagle-wings on high;
Theſe, theſe are ſcenes which tempt th' aſpiring muſe
Her ſylvan ſports and labours to refuſe;
Tempt from the cryſtal ſpring and breezy dell,
To join th' exulting croud, and ſtrike the ſounding ſhell.

Genius of Albion, guide th' adventurous lay,
Suſtain her flight, and ſmooth her arduous way.
With wreaths of ſea-weed crown'd, majeſtick pow'r,
Come from thy native rocks and watery bow'r:
Aid her, ſteep Pindus' flowery top to gain,
And touch with glowing energy her ſtrain.

All

All zeal, all fire, yet, trembling as ſhe ſpars,
She thy kind ſmile, thy magic hand implores:
Augment her fire, by riſing fears depreſt,
With bolder raptures animate her breaſt.

Fain would ſhe wake the ſweetly-vocal ſtring,
Victorious RODNEY's lofty praiſe to ſing;
Fain would her pow'rleſs hand with ſkill divine
Around his head unfading chaplets twine.
Think, happy Britons, what to him you owe,
And let your breaſts with grateful tranſport glow.
In his great ſoul, with wonder-ſparkling eyes,
See worth on worth, on virtues, virtues riſe;
See dauntleſs valour amiably unite
It's dazzling beams with mercy's milder light;
See there that nobleſt, beſt of wiſhes flame,
The wiſh to bleſs mankind, and raiſe his country's name.

Proud

Proud Rome, thy faded laurels now deplore,
Boaſt thy brave ſons, thy patriots boaſt no more:
All which in their undaunted conduct ſhone
With rays ſo brilliant, view combin'd in one.
Ye mighty names, convey'd from age to age,
With pomp auguſt, in hiſtory's glowing page:
Ye, whoſe applauſe to earth's remoteſt bounds
The golden trump of ſoaring fame reſounds;
Whoſe ſplendid worth th' attentive world admire;
Whoſe great examples every boſom fire;
Give way; your martial acts our eager ears
Surprize no more; a mightier name appears.
What are the vaunted harveſts you have gained
In dangerous fields with ſanguine torrents ſtain'd,
Compar'd with thoſe ſuperiour bays that ſhade,
In blooming triumph, his diſtinguiſh'd head?
The laurels reap'd on fam'd Pharſalia's ſoil
By godlike bravery unſubdu'd with toil,

Far

Far, far excell'd, no longer charm the eye,
Turn pale with envy, languiſh, droop, and die.
How ſinks aſpiring Pompey's fading fame!
And ev'n great Cæſar's yields to RODNEY's name.
Thus when, emerging from the ſhades of night,
The ſun all vigorous darts his orient light,
The ſtars, retiring, one by one decay,
Quench'd by the glories of his conquering ray.

O for one ſpark of bright Miltonian fire!
To ſweep with furious hand th' ecſtatick lyre:
Or of thy rage, thy ſpirit all divine,
O thou, nurs'd fondly by th' harmonious Nine
On Meles' flowery banks, ſome ſlender ſhare be mine!
Then might I paint the Heroe, paint his ſoul,
That zeal, that courage which diſdains controul,
In vivid tints, not deſtined ſoon to die,
Tints not unworthy of the theme I try:

Then

Then might this humble harp effuſe a ſtrain,
To which th' illuſtrious Hood his ear might deign;
Hood, in whoſe breaſt with equal force conſpire
The Patriot's firmneſs and the Warriour's fire.
Hail, mighty pair! heroic chiefs like you
Ev'n the bold Grecian pencil never drew.
Sure, had ye liv'd in thoſe auſpicious days,
When Aſia's Star diffus'd it's dazzling rays;
Th' intrepid Grecians, and Dardanian Pow'rs,
Mix'd in dire fight round Ilion's lofty tow'rs;
Th' Olympian ſeats convuls'd with fierce alarms,
Paris' blind flame, and Helen's fatal charms;
Theſe humbler ſubjects had at once been ſcorn'd,
And Britain's wars Mæonian lays adorn'd;
The ſtern Pelides had remain'd unſung;
The bard for You his loud-ton'd harp had ſtrung,
And with your praiſe alone fair Meles' groves had rung.

Nymphs

Nymphs of Caſtalia's ſpring, melodious throng,
To whom deſcription's nobleſt pow'rs belong,
Tune your ſoft-breathing lutes, your voices raiſe,
And ſound their triumphs in immortal lays:
Sing how their hand, a juſt revenge it's guide,
Curb'd with one blow inſidious Gallia's pride;
How from her head the boaſted palm it tore,
And chain'd her down, perhaps to riſe no more.
But what new proſpects, kindling wild ſurprize,
Now ruſh impetuous on th' arreſted eyes?
Cloſe-crowding ſhips the foaming ocean hide;
With the huge burden groans the tortur'd tide:
Grim Mars uſurps ſtern Neptune's wide domains;
Promiſcuous tumult, dire diſtraction reigns!
Here it's bold head Britannia's navy rears,
There threatening Gaul's collected ſtrength appears:
In dreadful order, front to front they ſtand,
Burn for the fight, and wait the great command.

And now more furious clamours wound the ſkies,
Loud, and more loud, the martial thunders riſe:
With matchleſs heat the hoſtile fleets engage;
What glowing pen can paint their mutual rage?
Thus, rudely burſting from th' Æolian cave,
With rival force the warring tempeſts rave:
Blaſt ruſhing fierce on blaſt, confuſion fills
The groaning foreſts and the trembling hills;
Trees heap'd on trees lie proſtrate all around,
And general ruin overſpreads the ground.
Scar'd with the tumults of th' increaſing fight,
The quivering Nereids take their headlong flight;
And down with Thetis, ſilver-breaſted Fair,
To their deep cells and coral grots repair.
Ev'n Neptune, ſhuddering with unuſual dread,
Deſcending, veils in ambient waves his head.
Hark, how the bellowing inſtruments of death
From their wide throats emit their fiery breath!

The

The dire explosion rends th' affrighted air;
And seas and skies a mourning aspect wear:
Quakes the vast ocean, rings the distant shore,
Peal following peal in one continuous roar.
Now from their iron mouths, that teem with woe,
Of sable smoke sulphureous volumes flow,
Snatch from the beauteous face of heaven it's light,
And, hideous, veil it in Tartarean night;
Now, quick-disgorg'd, big flaming torrents sweep
The blood-stain'd bosom of the labouring deep:
As when, thick-mounting to the darken'd pole,
Enrag'd Vesuvius' pitchy whirlwinds roll:
Now from it's thundering womb, impell'd on high,
Rocks following rocks in melted fragments fly;
Now spouting streams of red tempestuous fire
Dart through the Stygian gloom in many a dreadful spire.

Amidst

Amidſt theſe tumults, this terrific ſcene,
Uncheck'd, unſhaken, awfully ſerene,
Now here, now there, th' immortal RODNEY flies,
Hope kindling in his breaſt, and triumph in his eyes.
Yonder, O Muſe, th' aſſiduous DRAKE behold,
Like his adventurous nameſake nobly bold:
Brave as ſome lion, terrour of the plain,
He pours his furious lightnings o'er the main.
To his juſt praiſes tune th' harmonious lyre;
The vivid bays that crown his brows admire;
Bays, which, in ſpite of envy, age, or clime,
Shall bloſſom beauteous in unwithering prime.

Now RODNEY fires his hoſt: "Be firm," he cries,
"In your lov'd country's cauſe ev'n death deſpiſe."
His active hoſt with kindling rapture hears,
And thinks that War's majeſtick God appears:

Their

Their generous bosoms catch the martial flame,
And pant impetuous for immortal fame.
The wish to see their injur'd Albion blest,
With boundless influence reigns in every breast:
No other wish can boast it's empire there;
Absorb'd and lost in this superiour care:
Impell'd by this, no limits can restrain
Their warlike rage, and danger threats in vain;
They scorn, on conquest or on death intent,
The fiery storms by Gallic fury sent.
Great DOUGLAS, hail! hail AFFLECK, honour'd name!
Whose bold exploits the patriot's breast inflame.
Applauded Heroes, we with rapture view
Your great Progenitors revive in you;
Those dauntless Britons, venerable train,
Who, to secure fair Freedom's smiling reign,

Th' invading tyrant's lawleſs aims to quell,
So nobly battled, and ſo nobly fell.

Not Actium's ſelf ſuch genuine bravery knew
As what now riſes on my wondering view:
Not with ſuch beams did great Auguſtus ſhine;
Not half ſo brilliant, fam'd Antonius, thine.
The daring RODNEY and his conquering train,
Like mountain-torrents covering all the plain,
Hurl forth their vengeance with reſiſtleſs ſway,
And fill the trembling Gauls with wild diſmay:
The trembling Gauls with heart-felt pangs behold
Devouring flames their ruin'd ſhips infold;
And find 'tis ſure deſtruction to withſtand
So great a leader and ſo brave a band.
On that bold prowefs in amaze they muſe,
Which ſuch ſuperiour multitudes ſubdues!

See

See where he combats, foremoſt ſtill to meet
The fierceſt thunders of th' oppoſing fleet.
See, pregnant all with death, along the main,
How ruſh the flaming balls! but ruſh in vain:
He ſtands uninjur'd; his exalted head
With balmy wings protecting angels ſhade.
Thus, while the livid lightning round it flies,
Tow'rs the majeſtick oak, and all it's rage defies.

Now, Albion, now thy brighteſt ſmiles diſplay,
Now riſe, in more than mortal beauty gay,
And add new radiance to the beams of day.
Lo, palms, unfading palms thy brows intwine,
And round thy head eternal glories ſhine.
With raptured eyes th' accompliſh'd hero view,
Who bids thy withering ſplendours bloom anew;
Who for thy ſake has every danger brav'd,
Whoſe arm has rais'd thee, and whoſe valour ſav'd.

Rome's mighty rival, now thy ſway maintain,
Th' imperial miſtreſs of th' obſequious main;
To diſtant regions be thy lightnings hurl'd,
Check treachery's reign, and awe the trembling
world.

Hail, happy land, hail, favour'd from above,
Sweet ſeat of beauty, liberty, and love!
Now ſhalt thou tow'r in all thy ancient pride,
Now curb thy foes, their harſheſt threats deride,
As thy white cliffs defy the beating tide.
Thy ſanguine croſs in barbarous realms ſhall flame,
Where Rome's victorious eagle never came.

'Tis done! thy triumph endleſs ſhouts reſound,
And rocks and ſeas the Warriour's name rebound.
But, while exulting clangours fill the ſky,
Why heaves thy ſwelling breaſt, and ſtreams thy
melting eye?

Think, Muſe, Oh think on that intrepid *pair,
Their grateful country's boaſt, and darling care,
Who in her cauſe, their glory, and their pride,
With heart-felt ardour fought, with pleaſure dy'd.
Think on th' illuſtrious MANNERS' haplefs fate,
MANNERS the brave, the generous, and the great:
Then ceaſe to wonder why that mien appears
O'ercaſt with grief, that eye o'ercharg'd with tears:
With her their loſs in anſwering ſilence mourn,
Shed tear for tear, and ſigh for ſigh return.
Lamented Shades, deſert ſublime as yours
The virtuous patriot's warmeſt praiſe ſecures.
O from her foſtering arms forever torn!
O rudely nipt in life's inchanting morn!
Yet happy you! Ev'n life, that boon divine,
In ſuch a cauſe 'tis glorious to reſign.

* Captains BAYNE and BLAIR.

You,

You, if the Muſe an endleſs date can give,
Rever'd forever, ſhall forever live.
But ſure ſuch palms, without the Muſe's aid,
Shall flouriſh ſtill, in deathleſs bloom array'd:
Your deeds, your virtues, age to age ſhall tell;
On the lov'd theme remoteſt times ſhall dwell.

Proud Gaul is fall'n! triumphant Britons cry;
Proud Gaul is fall'n! their ſmiling ſhores reply.
But lo! thick clouds, wide-hovering, intervene,
And ſhade the beauties of the joyful ſcene:
Ah! ſtill around us furious diſcord roars!
Still hoſtile clangours ſhake th' Atlantic ſhores!
Oh, when ſhall war's deſtructive thunders ceaſe,
Loſt in thy ſtill ſmall whiſpers, lovely Peace?
When ſhall we view thy blooming olives ſpread?
When reſt once more beneath their friendly ſhade?

How long ſhall ſtrife, ill-fated ſtrife, disjoin
Whom nature's voice, whom intereſt, bids combine?
Ye powerful Guardians of a valiant land,
Who at the helm with ſtrenuous firmneſs ſtand;
Who, great as wiſe, thoſe ſtorms at once controul,
Which ſhake with terror the leſs generous ſoul;
Oh! ſtill purſue (forgive the daring Muſe)
The glorious paths your wiſdom bade you chuſe:
Then Peace, ſweet ſtranger, ſoon again ſhall ſhed
Her balmy bleſſings o'er Britannia's head;
Then all who triumph'd at her adverſe fate,
Shall rue that triumph, in their own, too late;
Low-cruſh'd, like Gallia, foes on foes ſhall lie,
Shall tremble at her nod, and at her frown ſhall die.

F I N I S.